



DoD Southeast Region Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species (TER-S) Workshop

Project #
06-310

Background:

The Department of Defense (DoD) manages nearly 30 million acres of land and thousands of square miles of air and sea space to conduct missions vital to national security. Many installations critical for military training are located throughout the southeastern United States. These installations provide essential habitat for numerous threatened, endangered and at-risk species (TER-S), yet are in areas with significant concentrations of urban, agricultural, and industrial use. To facilitate the recovery of listed species and mitigate against the need for new listings, increased attention must be given to the management of listed and at-risk species from an ecosystem and watershed perspective. This perspective must encompass the numerous land management jurisdictions throughout the Southeast region.

Objective:

The specific objectives for the *Southeast Region TER-S Workshop* were to: 1) assess TER-S management needs within a regional context, with an emphasis on system-level and cross boundary approaches; 2) assess these approaches for their potential to keep common species common, while recovering or enhancing TER-S populations; 3) examine the current state of the science, and practice within DoD, associated with such holistic approaches; 4) identify potential partners and existing partnership structures whose focus is, at least in part, meeting TER-S conservation objectives; 5) identify the gaps in knowledge, technology, management, and partnerships that if addressed could improve implementation of system-level and cross boundary approaches; and 6) prioritize investment opportunities to address the gaps.

Summary of Approach:

The workshop, which was cosponsored with the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) and Environmental Security Technology Certification Program, opened with a plenary presentation from the 45th Space Wing Command. This was followed by program overviews from the workshop sponsors, white paper presentations (Emerging Issues in Forest Health, Connectivity in Fragmented Landscapes, Ecology of Large-Scale Natural Disturbances, and Imperiled Aquatic Resources), and a field tour of Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. The field tour allowed participants to learn about the unique challenges DoD natural resource personnel face in managing protected and at-risk species while simultaneously ensuring that the military can continue to launch satellites and rockets. The following two

days consisted of concurrent breakout group discussions on System-Level Issues, Land Management and Dynamic Environments, and Overcoming Management Challenges.

Benefit:

By considering workshop recommendations, Legacy, SERDP, and ESTCP can help address regional ecological threats by targeting program resources to conservation-related research, demonstration, and management efforts that support species and habitat protection goals, while maximizing training and testing flexibility.

Accomplishments:

Workshop outcomes included a prioritized list of the top fourteen information gaps and management needs in the region, including restoration, watersheds, fire regimes, connectivity, and ecosystem structure and function. Participants also identified a need for better data sharing among regional stakeholders, and gained a better understanding of existing regional partnerships through which they can work to better integrate research, management, and collaborative initiatives among each other and with DoD to benefit TER-S in the region.

For more information on the *Southeast Region TER-S Workshop*, please visit www.serdp.org/tes/Southeast/.



Florida scrub jay – Photo by Rich Fischer

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